

VZCZCXRO2694
PP RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHKU #0203 0511553
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 201553Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0847
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 1094
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 3101
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3170
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000203

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NEA/ARP, NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [UN](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: LEBANON: KUWAIT DONATES USD 5 MILLION TO SPECIAL
TRIBUNAL/SINIORA VISIT

Classified By: CDA Misenheimer for reasons 1.4 b and d

Kuwait Allocates USD 5 million for Special Tribunal

¶1. (C) During a February 18 meeting with visiting former
Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Kuwait Prime Minister

SIPDIS

Nasser Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al Sabah told CDA that Kuwait
finalized the allocation of USD 5 million for the Special
Tribunal for Lebanon. He said that Kuwait set aside this
amount in coordination with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, each of
which, according to the PM, also pledged USD 5 million.
(Note: In a separate conversation with poloff, royal family
member and key government lobbyist Shaykh Mohammed A. M. Al
Sabah marked the Saudi pledge at USD 10 million, and
suggested that the PM may have confused the numbers. Shaykh
Mohammed confirmed that the Kuwaiti funds for the tribunal
were transferred on February 20).

PM Siniora on State of Affairs in Lebanon

¶2. (C) Mohammed told poloff that he sat in on a closed-door
meeting between the Kuwaiti PM and visiting Lebanese PM Fouad
Siniora on February 20. According to Sh. Mohammed, Siniora,
who is considered "an old friend" of Kuwait, complained to
the GOK of the current state of political gridlock in Lebanon
and of Hezbollah "throwing a wrench" into the Lebanese
efforts to reshape parliament. He also reportedly expressed
frustration over Iran pumping large sums of money into
southern Lebanon and called for Kuwaiti assistance in
impeding the movement of these funds. He asked for and
received Kuwaiti pledges for USD 50 million in fuel. He also
requested additional deposits of funds in the Lebanon Central
Bank to prop up the Lebanese currency. (Note: Sh. Mohammed
noted that Kuwait deposited USD 500 million in the bank in
the past, but has no plans to increase the amount.)

Local Press Interview with Lebanese MP Ammar Hourri

¶3. (U) Also visiting Kuwait was Lebanese MP Ammar Hourri, who
addressed an assembly of Lebanese expatriates in Kuwait and
spoke to the local Al-Rai Al-Aam newspaper on February 16,
giving his interpretation of the current state of affairs in
Lebanon. In his interview, he called for an independent
Lebanon, free from the influence of Syria and Iran. He said
that despite obstruction and resistance from various parties,
the Special Tribunal will be successful in investigating the
assassination of former PM Rafik Hariri. He criticized

Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah for provoking Israel and called for national unity to restore peace. He laid the blame for the political crises in Lebanon solely on Damascus. He warned that if there is no president in Lebanon by the time of the Damascus Arab summit, Arab states will clearly see the obstructionist policy of the Syrian state and will further isolate the Syrian regime.

***** *
For more reporting from Embassy Kuwait, visit:
[http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/?cable s](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/?cable%20s)

Visit Kuwait's Classified Website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/>
***** *
MISENHEIMER